



January 2005

The Bay Leaf

California Native Plant Society • East Bay Chapter • Alameda & Contra Costa Counties
www.ebcnps.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Field Trip, p. 4

Sunday, January 2, 2005, Huddert County Park, San Mateo County

Plant Sale Activities, p. 4

Tuesdays, January 4, 11, 18, 25, 9:00 am to noon,
Merritt College, Oakland
Landscape Horticulture Department

Board of Directors' Meeting

Wednesday, January 5, home of Joyce Hawley, 631
Albamarle Street, El Cerrito

Native Here Nursery, p. 4

Fridays, January 7, 14, 21, 28, Native Here Nursery
open 9-noon
Saturdays, January 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, nursery open
10-1

Conservation Committee, p. 2

Wednesday, January 12, 6:30 pm, the Conservation
Committee meets at 309 Pearl Drive, Livermore, home
of Mary Ann Hannon. If you plan to attend and want
pizza, call or e-mail Mary Ann to confirm, 925-443-
5588, hannonma@comcast.net.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

6000 Miles in the Northern Rockies: Roadside Wildflowers and Invasive Threats

Speaker: Bob Case

Wednesday, January 26, 2005, 7:30 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Public Library (directions below)

This month, Bob Case will take us on a virtual 6000-mile wildflower-watching trip through parts of Oregon and the Rocky Mountains of Idaho and Montana. Bob's skill and talent as a photographer are well-known; through the medium of his photos we'll travel to some of the most beautiful locales in this spectacular part of the country. Along the way, we'll see dramatic landscapes and many wildflower species, including familiar California natives and their not-so-familiar continental relatives. Bob will also introduce us to a selection of the invasive weeds of the region, some we know all too well (e.g., yellow star-thistle) and some we may soon know better than we would like (e.g., spotted knapweed, "the yellow star-thistle of Montana").

Bob Case recently retired as Deputy Agriculture Commissioner for Contra Costa County. He has been active in weed management for many years and now serves

on the board of the California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) and on the Invasives Committee of CNPS. Bob holds a Masters degree from San Francisco State University in Ecology and Systematics. He has taught biology and environmental science in many Bay Area community colleges for twenty five years. He enjoys extended travel and weekend jaunts in California to pursue spring and its bounty of wildflowers.

East Bay CNPS membership meetings are free of charge and open to everyone. This month's meeting will take place in the Auditorium of the Orinda Public Library at 24 Orinda Way (in Orinda Village). The Auditorium is on the second floor of the building, accessible by stairs or an elevator. The Auditorium will open at 7:00 pm. The meeting begins at 7:30 pm. Refreshments will be served after the presentation. Please contact Sue Rosenthal, phone 510-496-6016 or send an email to rosacalifornica@earthlink.net if you have any questions.

Directions to Orinda Public Library at 24 Orinda Way: From the west, take Hwy 24 to the Orinda/Moraga exit. At the end of the off ramp, turn left on Camino Pablo (toward Orinda Village), right on Santa Maria Way (the

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signal after the BART station and freeway entrance), and left on Orinda Way. From the east, take Hwy 24 to the Orinda exit. Follow the ramp to Orinda Village. Turn right on Santa Maria way (the first signal) and left on Orinda Way. Once on Orinda Way, go 1 short block to the parking lot on the southeast side of the new 2-story building on your right. There is additional free parking beneath the building as well as on the street. From BART (4 blocks): Exit the Orinda station, turn right and cross a pedestrian bridge, then cross a

second pedestrian bridge on the left. Go 1 short block on the sidewalk to the third pedestrian bridge. Go 2 blocks on Orinda Way to the Orinda Library.

Next Month's Program

Wednesday, February 23, 2005, 7:30 pm, Orinda Public Library:

Jim Shevock—*Bryogeography of California: what can we learn from the mosses about past and future climate changes?*

CONSERVATION ANALYST'S REPORT

Many conservation issues continue to face the East Bay. Regional planning is on-going for the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan. I attended workshops on the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)/Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) processes and on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as it relates to botanists and conservationists, to improve my efforts on behalf of our chapter. Knowing the HCP and CEQA processes are not the only tools needed to become an effective conservationist. Communicating with, and partnering with, other conservation organizations is another crucial component. We have begun planning conservation-related field trips. The following is a detailed account of the month's activities. (See end of article for acronym definitions.)

Livermore Intensive Agriculture DEIR

One of the East Bay's most treasured botanical spots, the Springtown Alkali Sink area, has been a focus of my work this month. The Springtown Alkali Sink contains one of the last seven mega-populations of palmate-bracted bird's-beak (*Cordylanthus palmatus*) left in the world and has the most genetically diverse population. Alameda County's planning department developed the Livermore Intensive Agriculture DEIR plan, which has the potential to harm the Alkali Sink and associated rare plants within it. In an effort to save this population and Alkali Sink, I continue to work with conservation volunteers to write a comment letter in regard to the plan. Along with the comment letter, we expect to participate in the planning process by attending a meeting late in the year or early next year to express our concerns about allowing intensive agriculture near this important plant population. Mary Ann Hannon has been keeping us informed of upcoming plans in the Livermore/Springtown area and alerted me to the possibility of collaborating with other conservation organizations. As a result, on Tuesday, November 9th, I had a meeting with Tri Valley Conservancy's Executive Director Sharon Burnham and the Sierra Club's East Bay representative Richard Schneider. I informed them of the hydrologic concerns for palmate-bracted bird's-beak, and of how irrigated agriculture could af-

fect this important population and the Alkali Sink in general (thanks to John Game for the botanical and hydrological information). They in turn provided me with some information about the project area related to the Livermore Intensive Agriculture DEIR plan and where they stand on the issue. Thank you, Mary Ann, for initiating this meeting. We plan on working together in the future on plans in the Livermore/Springtown area.

Vernal Pool Recovery Program

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, less than 10% of vernal pools remain in the world. In California, the two biggest threats to vernal pools are agriculture conversion and development. Glenn Keator describes vernal pool destruction in his book *Plants of East Bay's Parks*:

"[S]ince they (vernal pools) most often occur in desirable, low, rolling foothill country or on valley bottoms, vernal pool habitats are the first to be developed in any given area. Sadly, the East Bay has lost most of its vernal pool habitats. Many were destroyed before the importance of these special wetlands was appreciated."

But there are still important vernal pools to protect in the East Bay. On November 9th the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service submitted the Draft Recovery Plan for Vernal Pool Ecosystems for a 120-day review period. While a recovery plan is required at the federal level, at the local level the plan is for voluntary action only. It covers 33 species, 20 of which are listed under the federal Endangered Species Act, and 13 species of concern. Of the 20 listed species, 15 are plants and 5 animals. Scientific research and adaptive management are components of the plan. I was asked by the *San Francisco Chronicle* to comment on the plan. I said that the "voluntary" local implementation concerns EBC-NPS, explaining that land owners are often unaware of vernal pools on their land, or choose to disk up the pools without checking with the local agencies first. Within the next couple of months I will be reading

the draft and writing a comment letter to help ensure that the plan adequately protects the East Bay's vernal pools and associated rare plants.

Concord Naval Weapons Station

Twenty-three globally and statewide rare species and 80 that are locally rare, or rare in the East Bay, are known to exist in the vicinity of Concord. The Concord Naval Weapons Station (CNWS) in particular is a botanically unique place, with over 5,000 acres of open space including a coastal marsh. The city of Concord is in the process of updating its general plan as well as writing an EIR. Both plans have the potential to affect rare plant life within the city and CNWS. In an effort to connect with other conservationists dealing with the plans, I spoke with East Bay Regional Parks (EBRP) representative Larry Tong about the EBRP position on the Concord General Plan, with specific regard to the CNWS. We exchanged ideas for conservation strategies and shared our letters to the city about the NOP for the DEIR. We agreed to re-connect once the DEIR comes out. Mr. Tong also stated that he and other EBRP staff would be interested in participating in a field trip to the CNWS.

HCP/NCCP Workshop

Regional planning is becoming increasingly important as several counties throughout the state are writing Habitat Conservation Plans and Natural Community Conservation Plans (HCP/NCCP). An NCCP is an optional component of the HCP process that includes protection for communities with rare species, whereas HCPs specifically focus on protecting the listed species, not necessarily entire communities. Participating in these regional plans is crucial for conservationists as the plans are effective, on average, for 50 to 100 years. Conservationists, landowners, and others are encouraged to participate in the HCP planning process as "stakeholders." These stakeholders comment on each piece of the HCP/NCCP and attend stakeholder meetings along the way. As many of you know, the East Bay chapter is currently involved in the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP, and EBCNPS's stakeholder representative is Richard VrMeer. In order to become well versed in the HCP process, I attended a workshop presented by the John Hopkins Institute for Environmental Health on Tuesday, November 16th. The workshop featured speakers, panels, and question and answer periods. Highlighted speakers included Resources Agency Undersecretary Karen Scarborough and Assembly Member Lois Wolk.

The first panel's topic was "Partnering for Regional Conservation Planning." David Okita from the Solano County Water Agency, John Kopchik from the Contra Costa County Community Development Department,

and Loren Clark from the Placer County Planning Department spoke of options for regional planning coordination. John Kopchik went over the advantages and disadvantages of coordinating regional wetland permitting with endangered species permitting.

The second panel covered "Partnering for Implementation of Regional Conservation Plans." John Hopkins spoke about the relationship between stakeholders and advisory committees within the HCP process. He stressed the importance of working together and keeping everyone in the loop in order to create a successful regional plan.

The third panel was on "Adaptive Management." Andrea Atkinson from USGS gave a presentation on designing monitoring for NCCP adaptive management programs. The information from this talk will be useful when the time comes for developing the monitoring system for ECCC HCP/NCCP.

CEQA/NEPA Workshop

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) are the principal tools conservationists and writers of Environmental Impact Reports (EIR) and Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) use. Because NEPA and EISs only deal with federal lands or a federal nexus (projects funded federally, not necessarily on federal lands), the East Bay Chapter does not often deal with them. CEQA, as California's version of NEPA, and EIRs, as the state version of an EIS, are frequently used in the East Bay. CEQA guidelines detail whether or not an EIR needs to be written and what needs to be included in it. When commenting on an EIR, it is important to understand CEQA in order to adequately analyze the document. In an effort to become well informed in CEQA, I attended a workshop put on by the Friends of the Herbarium at Chico State University on Saturday, November 20th. Jenny Marr from the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) talked about how the California Environmental Quality Act can be used by botanists and conservationists. They provided me with information to use when reviewing EIRs and EISs. Ms. Marr provided several relevant case studies where she as a DFG representative stopped development projects, or influenced a plan. She also emphasized that we as a conservation group have the potential to influence what plans she reviews. If we are persistent in informing DFG about our plans, she will be more likely to review the EIR.

Key to the Acronyms

CEQA: California Environmental Quality Act
CNWS: Concord Naval Weapons Station
DEIR: Draft Environmental Impact Report
EBRP: East Bay Regional Parks

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ECCC: East Contra Costa County

EIR: Environmental Impact Report

EIS: Environmental Impact Statement

HCP: Habitat Conservation Plan

NCCP: Natural Community Conservation Plan

NEPA: National Environmental Quality Act

NOP DEIR: Notice of Preparation for a Draft Environmental Impact Report

USGS: United States Geological Survey

Jessica Olson

FIELD TRIP

Sunday, January 2, 2005, **Huddart County Park**, San Mateo County

Meet at the main parking lot (off Kings Mountain Road) at 2:00 pm.

Fetid adder's tongue (*Scoliopus bigelovii*), one of the earliest flowering plants in the year, is usually out first thing in the new year on the Crystal Springs Trail in the redwood forests in this pleasant county park. The walk is about 1.5 miles, with an elevation change of two hundred feet or so.

To get to the park: take I-280 south from San Francisco to the Woodside Road (State 84) exit. Take Woodside Road (84) west about 1.5 miles through the village of Woodside and take a right onto Kings Mountain Road. The park entrance is on the right a mile or two up the hill. The main parking lot is just after the pay station. You must pay for parking even if the station is not staffed.

Please contact David Margolies (510-654-0283, divaricatum@aol.com) if you need further information.

David Margolies



PLANT SALE ACTIVITIES



Tuesdays

January 4, 11, 18, 25

9:00 am to noon

Merritt College, Oakland

Landscape Horticulture Department

Parking fee: 50 cents

Rain or shine, there will be someone at the nursery on Tuesday mornings, working with the plants and ready to help with plant purchases.

Shirley McPheeters (925-376-4095)

NATIVE HERE NURSERY

Fridays, January 7, 14, 21, 28, Native Here Nursery open 9-noon

Saturdays, January 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, nursery open 10-1

Everything is wet and it's cold at the nursery. But the plants don't mind. We still have lots of *Tellima grandiflora* (fringe cups), which makes a great groundcover for shady areas. Also in stock is *Iris douglasiana*—get them while they last. Bulbs are starting to peek out: *Chlorogalum pomeridianum* (soap root), *Triteleia laxa* (Ithuriel's spear), *Dichelostemma*, *Zigadenus*. We have *Carex* (sedge) and *Triglochin maritima* (arrow grass) for watery gardens and lots of bunch grasses in 1-gallon size pots, including *Festuca californica*, *Koeleria micrantha*, *Elymus glaucus*, *Nassella pulchra* and *Nassella lepida*.

Just outside our upper gate we have a large bin of donated pots. Feel free to take any for your planting projects. All kinds of different colors and sizes. Great for school planting projects.

Volunteers are always welcome. No need to call ahead (except if it's raining or very windy). Show up either day we are open. We are located in Tilden Park at 101 Golf Course Drive (across the street from the entrance to the Tilden Golf Course).

Margot Cunningham

Penstemon tracyi, shown here from Packer's Peak in the Trinity Alps, is a distinctive regional endemic. It is a slightly shrubby species with dense foliage of bright green roundish leaves and very pale pink flowers in a crowded cluster. It is rare and prefers metamorphic scree slopes rather than the granite landscape shown in the photograph on page 8. Photo and caption by John Game.

GRANT REPORTS

Chapter Grant Supports Research on Leatherwood (*Dirca*)

A research grant from the East Bay Chapter is assisting me, a professor from Iowa State University, in my studies of our beautiful western leatherwood (*Dirca occidentalis*). Leatherwood is a rare shrub that grows only in scattered populations within six counties in the Bay Area. I have been studying it and the two other species in the genus *Dirca* for several years. My colleagues and I have determined how to achieve high rates of seed germination and have assessed the genetic relationships among the three *Dirca* spp. Now on a six-month sabbatical stay at Stanford University, I am focused on the genetics, ecology, and physiology of western leatherwood.

The East Bay Chapter grant is supporting the collection of census data within three populations of western leatherwood on the East Bay. Additionally, the grant will permit me to compare the genetics of plants within and among populations. My hypothesis is that many, perhaps most, shrubs of western leatherwood are of clonal origin. Clonal plants arise vegetatively (from rhizomes, for example) rather than from germinated seeds. The possibility of vegetative spread may represent an important strategy western leatherwood has to sustain itself as a species. But, because vegetative reproduction involves no genetic mixing among plants, I fear that diversity within the species might be relatively low. This could mean that western leatherwood may be quite vulnerable to environmental change or to pests or diseases.

In addition to work on these projects, I am involved with several other studies on western leatherwood this winter. These include determining:

- the lowest winter temperatures that the species can survive
- what pollinates the winter-time flowers
- responses of plants to differing exposures to sunlight
- whether plants in the East Bay, the Peninsula, and the North Bay differ genetically
- improved methods of growing seedlings in containers

If you have information on local western leatherwood populations, I would like to hear from you! Send me an e-mail message at: graves@iastate.edu.

William R. (Bill) Graves, PhD

Scholarship Recipient Research Project

I recently received a brief report from Alison Green, one of the recipients of the East Bay Chapter's scholarships. Ms. Green is in the master's program in Environmental Studies at San Jose State University. Ms. Green writes:

"With exotic species rapidly invading serpentine grasslands, the signature native plant refugia of these areas are being jeopardized. My research examined not only how these exotic species are affecting a rare annual endemic plant, *Streptanthus albidus* var. *peramoenus*, most beautiful jewelflower (CNPS 1B) and its associates, but it also examined the possibility of expanding populations of *S. albidus* var. *peramoenus* into areas currently invaded by exotic species. More specifically, *S. albidus* var. *peramoenus*, is currently restricted to shallow serpentine soils amid serpentinite rock outcrops, and exotic grassland species have invaded deep serpentine soils that neighbor these rock outcrops. I performed an experiment where I removed exotic species from both deep and shallow soil areas, sowed *S. albidus* var. *peramoenus* seeds in every plot, and evaluated the plant's success throughout the growing season.

"My results suggest that *S. albidus* var. *peramoenus* could persist in deep serpentine soils near rock outcrops if exotic grassland species were removed or greatly reduced. Further, several native plants recovered well in deep serpentine soil areas when exotics were removed, including the rare *Lessingia micradenia* var. *glabrata*, smooth Lessingia (CNPS 1B). These results indicate that refugia found on serpentine soils could be expanded under land management and restoration plans that include reducing populations of exotic grassland species."

Sandy McCoy, Grants Committee Coordinator

The love of wilderness is more than a hunger for what is always beyond reach; it is also an expression of loyalty to the earth, the earth which bore us and sustains us, the only paradise we shall ever know, the only paradise we ever need, if only we had the eyes to see. . . No, wilderness is not a luxury but a necessity of the human spirit, as vital to our lives as water and good bread.

Edward Paul Abbey (1927-1989)

ACTIVITIES OF OTHERS

East Bay Watershed Center at Merritt College

Conversations about Watersheds: A Conference on Volunteer Stewardship
January 13-16, 2005 at Merritt College, Oakland, CA

This conference is an effort to close infrastructure and network gaps within the watershed community. The interactive structure of the conference is designed to allow participants to talk about their experiences and to work toward creating solutions. The morning sessions will feature keynote speakers and the afternoon sessions will consist of facilitated discussions, panels and workshops.

All conference participants will receive a catalogue of the daily poster sessions.

For full details and registration form, please see conference brochure:
http://mountaincurrent.net/ebwc/downloads/EBWC_Jan_flyer.pdf

For an updated conference schedule, please see
<http://mountaincurrent.net/ebwc/>

Conference Sponsors:

- The East Bay Watershed Center
- David R. Brower & Ronald V. Dellums Institute for Sustainable Policy Studies at Merritt College (ISPS)
- The Watershed Project
- Friends of Five Creeks
- Friends of the Estuary

"Conversations About Watersheds" is funded by Merritt College and the CalFed Watershed Program.

Fees: \$15 students, \$25 general public for all or part of the conference and .5 units of college credit

Conference Schedule Outline:

Thursday, January 13: Local and Regional Regulatory Policy and Land Use

Afternoon concurrent discussion sessions:

- Bay Area Stream Buffers: Current Regulatory Efforts and Next Steps
- Introduction to Citizen Watershed Restoration

Friday, January 14: Volunteer Stewardship

Morning Keynotes: Robin Freeman and Sharon Farrell

Afternoon concurrent discussion sessions:

- Volunteer Watershed Management and Policy
- Land Acquisition, Land Trust, and Land Use Planning
- Organizational Development for Creek Groups

Saturday, January 15: Culture, Education and Science

Morning Keynotes: Steven B. Rauh and Sharon Fuller

Afternoon concurrent discussion sessions:

- Re-vegetation for Watersheds
- Volunteers and Watershed Science
- Watershed Culture and Education

Sunday, January 16: Workshop and Field Trips

Field trip times and locations TBA

Afternoon Workshop: Shaping an Effective Watershed Council

Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour

Receive free passes to 50 gardens. Registrants will receive a printed garden guide that provides details on each garden; garden talks will be scheduled throughout the day. A variety of gardens landscaped with California native plants will be open to the public. The gardens are pesticide-free, water conserving, low maintenance, bird and butterfly friendly, and contain 30% or more native plants. Five of the gardens have creeks flowing through them. Sunday, May 1, 2005, 10 am to 5 pm. Various locations throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Free admission; registration required at www.BringingBackTheNatives.net. Space is limited; register early to ensure a place. Sponsored by Kathy Kramer Consulting and the Urban Creeks Council. For more information, email Kathy@KathyKramerConsulting.net or call 510-236-9558 between 9 am and 9 pm.

Watershed Project

Kids in Gardens

In this two-day workshop, gather the tools that will help you build and integrate a garden into your school. Learn techniques to propagate plants, eliminate pests without harmful chemicals, improve your soil, reduce waste, conserve water, and create wildlife habitat.

Saturdays, January 22 & 29, 2005; 9 am-4 pm in San Francisco (Day 1: The Randall Museum and Day 2: Alice Fung Yu Elementary School)

Saturdays, February 5 & 12, 2005; 9 am-4 pm in Lafayette/Moraga (Location TBA)

Getting Started in Garden Design

This half-day workshop is a hands-on introduction to designing and building a school garden that promotes "green gardening" from the ground up, including basic layout of your school garden, obtaining and using recycled materials, preparing and caring for your soil naturally, and strategies for water conservation.

Saturday, February 26, 2005; 9 am-12:30 pm in Lafayette (Merriwood Children's Center)

To receive copies of our spring brochure, phone 510-231-9430 or email workshops@thewatershedproject.org.

The Watershed Project is a non-profit environmental education organization whose mission is to educate and inspire communities to protect their local watershed. Our educator programs train teachers and their students in integrating watershed education into formal curricula, participating in hands-on science, and investigating local environmental issues. Our educator training workshops are closely tied to California Content Standards in Science, Math, Language Arts, and Social Studies.

Jane Wardani

Board of Directors

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Recorded Chapter Information: 464-4977

CNPS Home Page: www.cnps.org

East Bay Chapter CNPS Home Page:

www.ebcnps.org

Bay Leaf online

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____ Telephone _____

I wish to affiliate with:

____ East Bay Chapter (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties)

____ Other _____

E-mail _____
(optional)

Membership category:

____ Student, Retired, Limited income, \$20

____ Individual, Library, \$35

____ Household, Family, or Group, \$45

____ Supporting, \$75

____ Plant lover, \$100

____ Patron, \$250

____ Benefactor, \$500

____ Mariposa Lily, \$1000

Mail application and check to: California Native Plant Society, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento CA 95816



Last month the *Bay Leaf* featured Brewer's spruce in the Trinity Alps. This photograph is another image from the Trinities, Sawtooth Peak from Boulder Creek Lake. The deep valley of Canyon Creek lies between the lake in the foreground and the mountain, but is hidden from view. Boulder Creek Lake is a very steep up-hill hike from Canyon Creek, but well worth it in summer for the serenity and wildflowers. The high peaks of the Trinities are mostly composed of granite, and their flora is related to that of the Sierra Nevada as well as the rest of the Klamath Ranges. *Photo and caption by John Game.*

**California Native Plant Society
East Bay Chapter
P.O. Box 5597, Elmwood Station
Berkeley CA 94705**

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**Time Value
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